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CHALLENGE

FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM ★ LUCHE POR EL COMUNISMO ★ PLP

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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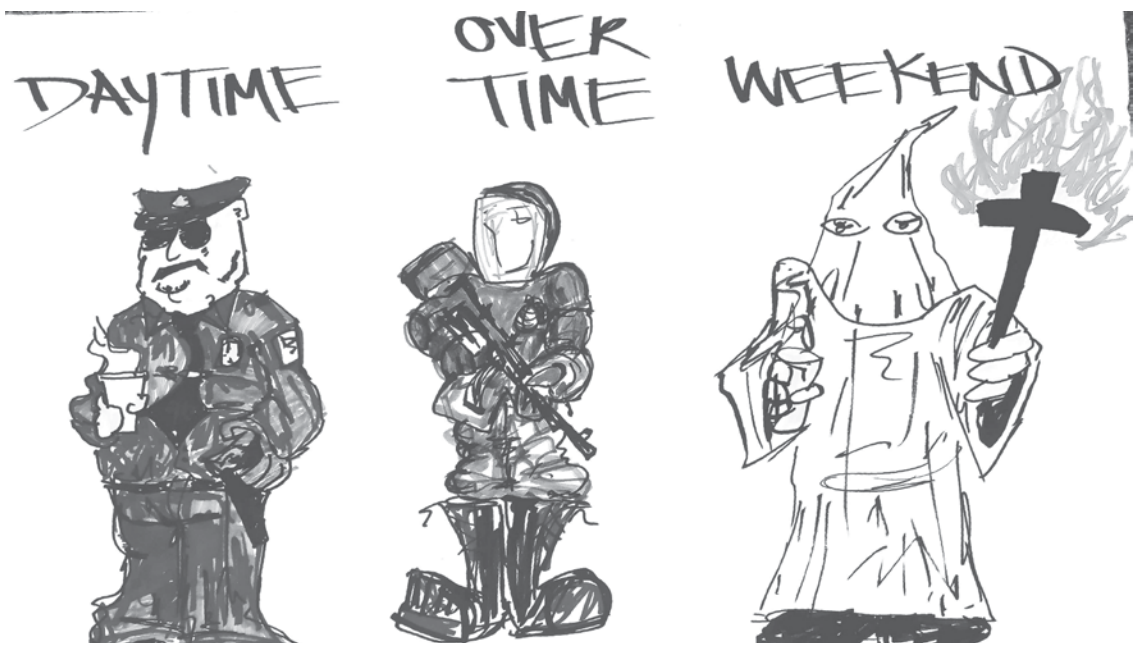
SUPPORT THE RODWELL AND SPIVEY FAMILIES

SMASH RACIST POLICE TERROR



Newark, NJ, June 8—"That's why [the youth] lost hope in this system, even the adults lost hope. That's why they don't come out to vote," shouted one of the family members outside the 5th precinct in response to recent police attacks on her family. Despite attempts at intimidation from the police and Mayor Baraka, the Rodwell and Spivey families pushed forward with the protest to let the city know that Black workers are fed up with the constant police harassment. Progressive Labor Party (PLP) stands with these families as they fight to free their family members from prison. As "radical" mayors try to silence these fighting voices, we know that these families are the future leaders in creating a communist world.

Gang and state violence = Both products of capitalism

In a neighborhood that has seen shootings amongst the working class, city and police officials have used this to justify their terroristic attacks. On Tuesday, June 1st, one of the young men in the area was outside his house when plainclothes cops ran up on him and asked him if he had a gun. His family members, worrying that something was happening, came out to support him. As more cops came, the young men were thrown to the ground and arrested.

The media and police were quick to spin the story, blaming the incident on these young workers minding their own business. Chief Racist James Stewart, Fraternal Order of Police President, played his role in creating fear by claiming that a "mob" attacked the police (nj.com, 6/2). As usual there was no gun found, but that didn't stop the harassment. A day later the police invaded the home of the family looking for something to justify their attacks. Mayor Baraka, supporting the cops, ordered a mobile police precinct set up on the block so an "increased police presence can be felt around the clock" (Dailyvoice.com, 6/4). Residents coming in and out of the block had to show ID while helicopters flew above.

This neighborhood is just one example of the need for communist revolution. As unemployment, poverty, and failing schools continue to make workers quick to turn on each other, we call on all youth and workers to turn their anger away from their class and against a system that will never serve them. These are the anti-working class ideas that destroy our class power. The bosses and their politicians will never provide real solutions for working class power, but these workers have the potential to turn their counter-revolutionary actions into real revolutionary change with a communist analysis.

Baraka - Model mayor for Big Fascists

Baraka has started to present himself as the model mayor for the Big Fascists (see Glossary, p. 6). A recent ABC News article cites Newark as an example for police reform nationwide (ABC-NEWS.com). After the incident Baraka attacked the openly racist Stewart, "The false narrative put forth feeds the old and archaic thinking that police are an occupying force, always in danger from a hostile community, rather than goodwill guardians of a community that has a growing respect and cooperation with one another," said Baraka in a statement Thursday morning. "That is what we are building in Newark, truth be told (nj.com, 6/3)." The truth is that the police are not the "goodwill guardians of the community." Baraka has also been silent on the ensuing attacks after the incident and has not reached out to the family, instead working closely with the 5th precinct to further the terror.

While this is happening, Baraka has been pushing his "Civilian Review Board." This is the same as the National Labor Relations Board that was established by the government after militant working class struggles in the early 20th century. These boards are used to kill any working class struggle and have workers sit idly by while these capitalist institutions "provide justice." But we know the only way for real justice is an end to the capitalist system that relies on police terror to keep workers in their place.

Black workers lead the way

The rally confirms our line that Black workers are key to communist revolution. Last year the Newark Water Coalition tried to hold a rally in front of the 5th precinct. The Baraka administration, led by Mayor Baraka's brother and Chief of Staff, Middy Baraka, was able to organize Black workers to support the cops and smash the rally. They were able to do it because the rally did not include any youth or workers from the community. This time around Middy Baraka was there, but because of the militancy of the families he was forced to stand there and watch as the families recounted the incident and called for more fight back.

From Newark to Palestine: fight back against racist police terror

At the rally another organizer made comparisons to workers in Palestine. "If you look at those [police] videos it looks like we are in Palestine." A follow-up podcast discussing this matter also discussed the similarities between the forced evictions in Israel and the forced gentrification in U.S. cities. As workers across the world fight back, from Colombia to Gaza to the U.S., making these connections is essential in building a revolutionary international working class. The bosses will always try to keep us from making these connections. The PLP will continue to fight to smash borders and see how all of these struggles are connected as we move forward in building one international communist party that will smash this system once and for all. ✪

JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

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OUR FIGHT

☆Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

☆The dictatorship of the working class — communism—can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

☆Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

☆While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

☆Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society's benefits and burdens.

☆Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

☆Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women— sexism—and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

☆Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

☆Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

☆Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

CHALLENGE is for the working class, produced by the working class. The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

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Editorial

Workers rebel vs. Colombia's capitalist crisis

As CHALLENGE goes to press, and mass protests involving more than one million workers in Colombia enter their seventh week, we are witnessing the power of the working class in real time. Initially triggered by a government plan to raise taxes on wages and basic necessities, the uprising has virtually shut down the country. It has channeled the class anger of young workers into a mass fight for basic income, opportunities for youth, and an end to police and military brutality. The working-class rage has exposed the weakness of the U.S. bosses and the rise of their rival Chinese capitalists in the imperialists' sharpening competition for control of the country.

Progressive Labor Party (PLP) is working to build a revolutionary communist movement in the heat of this struggle. However this battle plays out in coming weeks, our goal is to continue to grow and develop a young communist leadership for the struggles of the future (see front page).

Working-class power

The demonstrations began on April 28, in response to a proposed tax increase on basic goods and workers' salaries. This came at a time when the working class in Colombia had been devastated by Covid-19. More than 90,000 have died, according to the official count (worldometer.com, 6/5), with the true number likely several times higher. Over 3.5 million people have been pushed into extreme poverty (BBC, 5/31).

Though the bosses canceled the tax plan a few days later, the demonstrations have continued across the country. Young workers in the streets have shown courage and militancy in the face of brutal and deadly attacks by the police and military. Scores of protesters have been slaughtered (Washington Post, 5/20). On May 28, in Cali, 14 workers were killed by the police and civilian vigilantes while guarding roadblocks around the city (ABCNews, 6/1).

The power and bravery of the working class is inspirational. But without a revolutionary outlook, it will be impossible to liberate ourselves from the exploitation and brutality of capitalism.

Leadership and misleadership

The liberal leaders of the National Strike Committee are working hard to get the working class off the streets. A coalition of unions and student groups, including the Central Unitaria de Trabajadores, the Teacher's Union, and the Colombian Association of Student Representatives, are collaborating with the Ivan Duque government to negotiate an end to the protests and limit the struggle to narrow reforms, To this point, however, they have been unsuccessful. They are caught between the anger of the working class and the unwillingness of the Colombian bosses to make substantive concessions.

The division between the working class and the liberal leaders grew when the police and military brutally attacked the protests. As the National Strike Committee called for peaceful demonstrations, young people responded by barricading the streets and burning police vehicles and even some police stations (Wall Street Journal, 5/22).

PLP has been on the barricades and leading marches, confronting the police and military, while at the same time recruiting workers into communist study groups and distributing CHALLENGE. We have also organized workers in our community to cook and distribute food to anyone who needs it. Theory and practice are working hand in hand. As we've engaged protesters in discussions on why we need to build a communist movement led by PLP, the struggle in the streets has built confidence in our class and helped people to see the possibility of a communist future. Our ties within youth groups have helped us organize militant demonstrations despite enforcement of bans on protests by the bosses' cops. We've used these mass events to distribute PLP flyers and CHALLENGE.

Chinese bosses move in

The broader context to the rebellion is the weakening of the longtime alliance between Colombian and U.S. imperialist bosses. For decades, Colombia's rulers have welcomed U.S. military training and police funding to counteract the political influence of opposition and guerilla movements within the country and across Latin America.

From mining and coffee to auto manufacturing and oil production, the capitalist bosses have lost over $2 billion from strikes and other disruptions (bloomberg.com 5/28). U.S. President Joe Biden is now being forced to confront the Mobile Anti-Disturbances Squadron (ESMAD), the government death squad he championed as a U.S. senator in 1999 (aljazeera.com, 11/18/20). During the current rebellion, the Biden administration called for peace from both sides—and then made its real position clear by asking for $453 million in assistance to Colombia—$41 million more than the U.S. aid package under Donald Trump. Biden's request included more than $140 million for the murderous police (semana.com, 5/28). When push comes to shove, capitalism relies on state violence to enforce its rule.

Within Colombia's ruling class, a competing set of bosses—led by liberal capitalists like Senator Gustavo Petro and Bogota's mayor, Claudia Lopez—is trying to steer workers away from Duque, the right-wing "populist" sponsored by U.S. imperialism. This split provides an opening for the Chinese imperialist bosses.

After the mass workers' movement forced Duque to revoke his proposed tax reform, Petro tried his hardest to end the protests. He declared that the cops are not workers' enemies and pushed for an end to the strikes (AP News, 5/17). Petro has also criticized U.S. capitalism while praising Chinese capitalism for its help in the pandemic (Twitter, 3/10/2020). Lopez, like Biden, has called for an end to violence on both sides—as if there was no difference between the cops' militarized terror and workers' struggles for the basic necessities of life (Semana, 05/31). She alternates between empty apologies for the profit system and empty calls for social and economic transformation. Last October, in announcing the winning bid from a Chinese company on a multibillion dollar metro project, Lopez celebrated the start of a new relationship with China (Harvard Political Review, 5/10).

Fighting for communism

Whenever the working class acts collectively to seize control of a community or the streets, however temporarily, they provide glimpses of what it will take to build workers' power and a workers' state—communism. The emerging generation of militant workers in Colombia reminds us that we have the power to make the bosses shake. As we fight in the militant reform struggle, we must make clear what is primary: to build PLP and a movement for communist revolution.

From Colombia to Gaza, in every neighborhood we live and work, we must refuse to be fooled by any and all bosses. There is no future for the working class under capitalism. Our fight is to organize for a world run by and for the working class. Join us! ✪

Put bus strike on the route to PLP

PLP believe Black working class leadership is a vital engine for steering our class on the path to liberation from racist, sexist capitalism.

HYATTSVILLE, MD, June 9—A few weeks ago, over 100 MetroAccess workers, an on-call service for people with disabilities, went on strike against the private contractor MV Transportation, over disputes regarding pay and working conditions. The strike was led by Black women, who organized dispatchers to temporarily close down the call system for the regional MetroAccess bus system in the Washington, D.C. region for a day. Once again proving that Black workers are key to putting this racist, sexist, rotten system out of its misery.

As workers shut down the transportation infrastructure, Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members and friends who work for the public transit system joined the picket line, leading chants on the bullhorn, distributing CHALLENGE, and building unity for future joint actions against the transit bosses in the region. Bold class struggle, rather than relying on politicians, is the way forward as we build militancy in the fight for our class and ultimately for communism, workers power!

The strike was provoked by the racist arrogance of the MV Transportation bosses who offered a ridiculous 13-cent-per-hour raise when these workers make poverty wages below $15 an hour . The use of contractors by the Metro transit system is part of a devious plan by the bosses to divide workers into "better-paid" and "lower-paid", create animosity among workers, weaken the union and prepare to decimate our income and benefits as an economic crisis in transit looms large. We demand immediate pay equity across all divisions, whether contracted-out or not.

What will happen when the temporary stimulus payments to transit from the federal government stop? The bosses will attack! We must prepare ourselves for the battle ahead. Thanks to the bold workers at the MetroAccess call center for showing us an important step in this fight!

We invite those workers, and all workers, to join the PLP in the long fight for an egalitarian world totally run by the working class. That's working class power. That's communism!✪

Letter

Student gets political, asks for CHALLENGE

I got a text from one of my students in the Social Justice Club last night that read "I was wondering if you knew where I could get the next issues of the newspaper that was handed out at the protest we attended? It was named along the lines of "communist labor party" or something like that. I remember you used to give them to a classmate and I was wondering if there's any where I could find them whether online or if there's some sort of mailing list".

As I'm reading this text beaming ear to ear, I reflected on the transformation this student has gone through. In a short two years, she has gone from a somewhat introverted young woman, who fixed her hair in the mirror way too much in my opinion, into an outspoken fighter for justice. In that time she has seen a football stadium gentrify her neighborhood and the negative impact that is having on the people who have lived there for decades. She also saw a Black man suffer a slow death by the knee of a killer cop. And on top of all that, she lived through over a year of a pandemic that was allowed to ravage Black, Latin working class communities worldwide.

She is not the only one! Young people are being politicized at a rate that I haven't seen in my lifetime. We have to be there beside them to walk with them on their journey of uncovering how to change the world. Young people will grow the Progressive Labor Party and continue to move us forward on the path to revolution.

International solidarity for workers in Colombia

NEW YORK CITY, June 5—Protests and demonstrations have shaken the rulers of Colombia (see editorial, page 2). The working-class across the globe has shown a lot of solidarity with the workers in Colombia. In New York City, under the hashtag #SOSColombia, a bus was organized to join a national march in Washington, D.C.

A Progressive Labor Party (PLP) club joined the bus at 6AM in Midtown to support the workers fighting back in Colombia with international working-class solidarity and with the message of communist revolution.

In Colombia, since April 28, millions have marched in the streets, while the ruling class invests millions of dollars in weapons, tanks and police training to oppress the workers. Massacres, police brutality, people disappeared by the police, arbitrary arrests, victims of sexual assault, and more have been part of the conflict in Colombia for decades. Nowadays, the struggle has spread from the rural areas to the cities, initially spurred by plans to raise taxes on the working-class and further fueled by the unbearable conditions oppressed upon our brothers and sisters. It's becoming clearer that the entire racist capitalist system has to go.

Inspiring bus ride and protest

Speeches, music, chanting, and even dancing revved people up as water and sandwiches were shared. There was never a moment of quiet. The bus ride was full of cheer and anger against President Alvaro Uribe, the imperialist killer of Colombia. We listened to Colombian protest songs, sang a version of Bella Ciao, and prepared for the march.

On arrival, we unloaded signs and equipment to join the group already there. Hundreds of people soon began marching. As we passed the White House, speakers aimed their words at the tourists, telling them that the Colombian government was killing its people using U.S. dollars and training. Chants and singing were constant, alternating spanish and english.

Signs were carefully spread out for display near a tent, where water and supplies were ready and microphones were set up. Speeches, songs, and poetry in spanish and english continued for six hours while many retreated to the shade.

Smash imperialism with international working-class unity

A comrade gave a speech at the rally, attacking imperialism and the role of the U.S. and Biden in Colombian fascism. Part of the political message at the rally was that Colombia needs democracy and that Uribe is an anti-democratic killer. But our comrade listed a few of the countries devastated by U.S. imperialism: Mexico, India, Gaza, Chile and Brazil. She listed a few more of the many that receive funding from the U.S. for military and war: Afghanistan, Egypt, South Africa, Congo (Kinshasa), Israel, Iraq, Jordan, Ethiopia, Kenya.

She listed the skyrocketing atrocities against the working class in Colombia: 3,789 cases of police brutality, 1,248 victims of physical violence by the police, 1,649 arbitrary arrests, 705 violent interventions by the public force, 65 victims with injuries to

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Capitalism, a deadly disease

NYC Retirees fight attacks on medicare

NEW YORK CITY—Over 100 workers demonstrated recently after it was revealed that Medicare of over 200,000 retired New York City (NYC) workers will be privatized. This new plan was struck by union misleaders and liberal Democratic Party politicians to make up a shortfall in the medical "stabilization fund" for current and retired workers. Demonstrating workers instead demanded that all workers and retirees not be moved into privatization until all retirees and workers are involved in the process. The demonstration was called by the Retiree Advocates/ United Federation of Teachers, with retirees from the DC-37 Retiree Association, the Professional Staff Congress (PSC-CUNY) and other retiree groups joining with them to protest the privatization of our Medicare health care.

Communists in the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) have been in the thick of the fight from various unions. It was PL'ers who first exposed that the union misleaders and politicians have been secretly planning this racist scheme for over three years, and it's PL'ers who are struggling to broaden this fight into class war to guarantee healthcare the only way we can: by smashing capitalism with communist revolution.

Capitalist racist "advantage"= death

The bosses' plan is this: $600 billion will be saved each year by making us go through one private company to get Medicare. They will supposedly save money even though the companies who we must go through take out 12-18 percent of every dollar for administrative fees. These fees pay for their profits and tremendous executive salaries. These Medicare "Advantage" plans (originally called Medicare HMOs) will do this by restricting how retirees can get health care and where they get healthcare. Many doctors and health care providers, who accept Medicare do not accept Medicare Advantage. In addition, we believe we will ultimately have to go through gatekeepers for specialists and advanced testing and care. Denials are so frequent that over 70 percent of all the appeals are overturned. Another 5 percent were partially overturned (*U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General, Medicare Advantage Appeal Outcomes and Audit Findings Raise Concerns About Service and Payment Denials, Sept. 2018 and Consumer Reports March 28,. 2019*). Medicare Advantage plans: "deny preauthorization of services for beneficiaries, and payments to providers, in order to increase profits." Unfortunately, these appeals take a long time and just waiting to see a specialist often results in death.

The union misleaders' plans are racist as usual. They will increase racist inequality in that all city retired workers will have up to $1,500 in copays. Of the many city retirees who get pensions and Social Security that are extremely low, a disproportionate number are Black and Latin workers. This will cost one friend of PLP over 20 percent of her income.

Union misleaders and bosses: partners in crime

Why is the money needed? Under Democrats and Republicans, for decades, more and more tax breaks have been given to the rich at both the federal and state level. Democrat Andrew Cuomo proposed cuts in Medicaid during the Covid-19 crisis while the union misleaders snuck agreements into our contracts that promised to save money on healthcare by the workers paying for our last round of raises. Most of all, ALL recent U.S. presidents, including Jim Crow Joe Biden, have accelerated the build-up of the military to counter the growing power of the U.S.'s imperialist rival China.

The union misleaders have opposed single payer plans (Medicare for All) so they could tell us what great medical plans they get for us. UFT Unity caucus hack, Tom Murphy, boasted about stopping the NY State single payer plan at the last in-person retiree association meeting before Covid-19 shutdowns. Communists argue that unions must fight for all workers, not just their members. Furthermore, they should not support the capitalist medical system.

Many, many more people died during Covid-19 because they never had access to medical care before getting sick and were afraid to go get treated because they didn't have health care. Many young Black and Latin workers died when they were admitted to hospitals because they hadn't been given any diagnosis of conditions such as high blood pressure and diabetes because of their lack of access to health care. This exposed the medical inequalities that exist under a capitalist system. We need to fight back against these racist and class-based inequalities.

State run health care systems have been and are continuing to be cut back all over the world; even in so-called liberal social democracies such as Sweden, Great Britain, and France. Hard won reforms are taken away when the capitalist class thinks people are not organized enough to fight back and when they need the money to invest elsewhere: Now they are investing in war. We must organize Progressive Labor Party to end capitalism and create a health care system that serves the entire working class. Only communist revolution can do that. Join us!✪

Colombia: May Day and workers' fightback

COLOMBIA—The marking of May Day this year resonated with protests and masses of workers taking the streets. They are rejecting the proposed anti-worker tax reform that prioritizes President Ivan Duque and his capitalist masters represented by the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and Inter-American Development Bank. These bloodsucking financial bosses conspire to attack us workers and try to completely ruin the international working class.

The historical commemoration of May 1st was sharpened with this elevation of class struggle. The so-called labor "leaders" are unable to organize and convene the working class, which is more and more rejecting the calls to surrender and conform to the current state of capitalist dictatorship and wage slavery. In northern Bogotá, we have made a presence in these protests, due to the close proximity of our residence, even though our collective has been affected by the cuts in transportation and the dangers of Covid-19.

Our role in these marches has been to spread CHALLENGE and our flyers as well as talk with friends and protesters, showing them that the road to victory is the unity and organization of the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) and its international communist line. We are building the fight for workers' power and the organizing all of society according to the needs of our class.

Our participation in these protests have been very enriching, because there is great involvement of militant youth and workers with great enthusiasm, bold leadership and many proposals for advancing revolutionary struggle. However, there still remains an acute need to politicize the masses with class consciousness and a defined revolutionary strategy, so as not to fall naively in folklore and the defense of the bourgeois constitution, nationalism and the state's rotten "democracy." To fight for the bosses' ideas is to continue a vicious circle, where our class fails to become the main protagonist of these struggles.

The murderous capitalist system makes clear its criminal objectives and attacks us with police brutality, paramilitaries, mercenaries and assassins. In the recent uprising they have killed at least 54 protesters while committing over 20 cases of sexual abuse against women. There have been dozens of disappearances and cases of torturing. More than 50 people have lost their eyes and more than 1000 fighters against the tax reform have been imprisoned. These brutal bosses continue to exercise their armed state power, demonstrating their racist, fascist and sexist character against the working class.

After more than 30 days of protest and much political discussion we continue linking with the masses, supporting reform demands while emphasizing that the victories of these struggles must be political in order to be long-lasting. To help present our line, we share our revolutionary slogans, "Against the capitalist virus, communism is the vaccine" and "With or without pandemic, capitalism only gives misery!"

We struggle daily with these protesters to break the ideological blockade that capitalist culture has submerged us in. We need to be aware of who the enemy is and what their tricks and false ideals are, so as not to fall into the error of defending the bosses and their deadly profit system.

We will demonstrate that the fight of the workers knows no racist borders! Onward fellow workers, everything we do counts.✪

80th Anniversary of Hitler's Attack on USSR

Red Army smashed Nazis

Iconic photo of USSR solider raising a victory flag over the German Parliment, in Berlin 1945, signaling the defeat of the fascist Nazi menace.

On June 22, 1941, in the middle of World War II, more than 3,000,000 Nazi troops invaded the Soviet Union. Fascist troops from Finland, Rumania, Hungary, Italy and Spain later joined them. This, the largest military attack in history on any country, was a second attempt by the capitalists to smash the world's first workers' state. Only 18 years earlier in 1917, right after the Russian Revolution, imperialist troops from 14 countries, including the U.S., Britain and France had invaded the Soviet Union to "strangle the socialist infant in its cradle." The Bolsheviks (communist revolutionaries) organized to defend their revolution. Though 4.5 million Soviet workers lost their lives, the communist-led Red Army defeated them. Now Adolf Hitler's armies would meet a similar fate.

Virtually all Western military experts predicted Hitler would be in Moscow in six weeks. Capitalists in the U.S. and Western Europe didn't care. They wanted the socialist Soviet Union weakened or even defeated by the Nazis. But less than four years later, Soviet troops marched triumphantly into Berlin, having smashed the "invincible" Nazi war machine.

About 80 percent of Hitler's armies were tied down in Russia on the 2,000-mile-long Eastern Front. By the time the allies launched the D-Day invasion of France in 1944, the Red Army had already swept the Nazis out of all of occupied Russia and part of Eastern Europe and Soviet tanks were rolling towards Germany at 40 miles a day.

Today a flood of movies, books and TV specials tell us how the U.S. single-handedly won World War II, saving "Private Ryan" and the world. In fact, U.S. rulers were worried that if they didn't invade France when they did, the Red Army would liberate all of Western Europe by itself.

Even Western historians agree the Soviet Union bore the brunt of the battle against Hitler and the Soviet victory at Stalingrad was the turning point of WWII. The USSR lost over 20 million lives defeating the Nazis (75 times the 300,000 U.S. deaths). And 75 to 80 percent of Nazi WWII casualties were inflicted by the Soviet Army. In the Nazi-occupied areas of the Soviet Union, "about two-thirds of the houses and productive capacity was destroyed." Not one bomb fell on the U.S. during the entire war. [All figures from The World Almanac of World War II.]

U.S. and British imperialists conspire against the Soviet Union

The imperialist conspiracy to smash the Soviet Union began long before WWII. The British and French rejected five separate Soviet proposals for an alliance against Hitler in the 1930s. The West supplied Hitler with oil, rubber and bank loans for his war machine. They hoped Hitler would move east and crush the Soviet Union and thereby prevent the spread of the overthrow of the capitalist profit system. When Hitler marched into Poland, Britain and France "declared war," but it was a "Phony War," because 110 Western divisions did nothing while the Nazis mopped up in Poland, hoping Hitler would continue to move eastward and invade the Soviet Union, the workers' state.

But before they took on the Soviets, the Germans occupied Holland, Belgium and Norway. Hitler then invaded France. The French high command went over to Hitler's side, allowing him to march into Paris in three weeks, driving British troops into the sea at Dunkirk.

Communist underground leads resistance against the Nazis

In almost all of Europe, the communist underground led the resistance that helped defeat the Nazis over the next four years. Communist-led partisans behind enemy lines in the Soviet Union alone destroyed one million Nazi troops, more than the combined total destroyed by the U.S. and British in the entire war.

When Hitler finally invaded the Soviet Union, the predicted "six weeks" victory never happened. German troops found total destruction and desolation in every captured Russian city or town — the "scorched earth" policy. Soviet defenders burned everything to the ground that could be useful to the Nazis and that they could not take with them. Then they organized armed resistance behind enemy lines. Over 6,000 factories were dismantled and moved east of the Ural Mountains, then re-assembled to produce weapons again, a feat requiring total unity and support of Soviet workers, unmatched by any country, before or since.

By December 2, 1941, the Nazis were just 20 miles from Moscow and the Kremlin (headquarters of the Soviet government). Joseph Stalin stayed in Moscow throughout this period and rallied the Soviet workers and Red Army. On December 6 (the day before Pearl Harbor), the Soviets launched a counter-attack on a 500-mile front and drove the fascists from the gates of Moscow. Hitler was forced to halt this offensive.

Battle of Stalingrad: Turning point of World War II

By September 1942, the Nazis had begun another offensive, reaching the outskirts of Stalingrad. They planned to take that city and then seize the oil of the Caucasus region to the south (bordering oil-rich Iran) and drive on Moscow to the north. But it was not to be. Soviet soldiers and workers fought for Stalingrad block-by-block, house-by-house and room-by-room to halt the "unbeatable" Nazi invaders. Workers in arms factories produced weapons for the Red Army working 24 hours a day. When Nazi troops captured factories, heroic Soviet workers and soldiers would take them back.

The entire German Sixth Army and 24 of Hitler's generals were surrounded and killed or captured in the battle of Stalingrad. Never again would the Nazis mount an offensive against the Red Army. Stalingrad was truly the turning point of the Second World War. The communist-led Soviet Union smashed the largest and most powerful army ever mounted by a capitalist power.

Internal weaknesses and reforms eventually destroyed the first workers' state. Socialism retained too many capitalist concepts, especially wages and money, and the Soviet Union reverted to capitalism. But as a British general remarked in introducing a documentary about the Battle of Russia, "if it were not for the heroism of the Soviet workers, if Hitler had conquered the Soviet Union, millions of citizens in Britain and the United States would be dead today." We are slowly learning the hard lessons from the defeat of the old communist movement. But emulating the mass heroism and determination they displayed in defeating fascism is the goal of Progressive Labor Party in our fight for communist revolution. ✪

LETTERS

We encourage **all** *CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.*

Killer kkkops and mental health are class issues

May was mental health awareness month and National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) hosts a fundraising walk every May. During 2020 our family weathered some serious mental health crises and NAMI helped provide education, resources, and support.

Unfortunately many workers in crisis do not get the help that they need. In our work with families whose loved ones have been murdered by police, we have seen that many of them were in a mental health crisis and instead of giving assistance, the police killed them.

We decided that we would walk in memory of those workers whose lives were taken during a mental health crisis. Talking about mental health and how we can get help without calling the police is still a big problem. We know that under capitalism, workers' health and well-being is not a priority. Only under communism will workers' needs be put first.

We continue to fight for justice side by side with these families. We share with them the limited resources that are available as alternatives to the police under capitalism. We also struggle to turn this movement into a larger fight against the capitalist system that needs these racist, killer cops to terrorize the working class.

★★★★★★★

Remembering a comrade

Regarding the obituary on Len Ragozin, many of us old-timers remember Len as having been the editor of Progressive Labor Party's (PLP) CHALLENGE newspaper around 1970 and as a writer of important articles for PL Magazine, especially on science and Marxism. He leaves quite a legacy in helping build PLP in our earliest days.

★★★★★★★

Racist class violence, bedrock of capitalism

U.S. rulers regularly reject gun control because they say the problem is violent people not guns. But who are the violent people? Many participants in the Capitol insurrection were police and military who are responsible for most of the violence in the U.S. and worldwide. Capitalism exists because U.S. imperialism and fascism created the armed forces that allow bosses to steal labor and resources through violence.

Martin Luther King named racism as the essence of that violent culture. The U.S. is unique among imperialist powers in having built its wealth on the backs of chattel slavery situated within its own border. African workers were kidnapped and exploited by many imperialist powers, but only the U.S. brought chattel slavery to its own shores.

It didn't take long for the early U.S. ruling class to understand that the most violent, brutal wedge – racism – had to be driven through the heart of the multiracial working class in order to reap the profits of chattel slavery. The all white slave patrols were the origin of the modern police force. Racist ideology was driven into the minds of white workers. This origin of profound racist division required constant reinforcement through violence. From the horrors of slavery itself, to the years of Jim Crow segregation, lynchings and the mass slaughter of Black workers who tried to fight back, the foundation of the U.S. was cemented with racist violence. It still is today.

Racism creates hate, division and fear among workers, creating huge profits for capitalists from wage differentials for workers of different races and genders doing the same jobs. Materialism and individualism are drummed into worker's heads as the way to succeed by exploiting other workers and avoiding human and collective instincts like unions that would threaten capitalist power.

Only a communist, anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist struggle can defeat the racist, violent and war culture imposed on workers. The working class must defeat racism in all its forms in order to unite as one mighty force to smash capitalism and imperialism and build a communist society

★★★★★★★

"The Internationale" comes to WBAI

The Memorial Day program for The New Day radio show on WBAI, New York asked for listener's favorite songs. I was connected and asked them to play "The Internationale" to honor people worldwide who were fighting for a new world. A technician said he never heard of it but would look it up. I said it was sung in every language.

A few minutes later, "The Internationale" started to play and as I jumped around my room with my fist in the air, I realized the working class words to the music were changed.

After the song ended, the show's moderator apologized that the song was a revisionist interpretation of "The Internationale" and that she would try to get the original to play sometime.

Anyway it was great for many radio listeners to hear "The Internationale" and connect it to people's struggles around the world.

★★★★★★★

Glossary

Communist political terms

Fascism

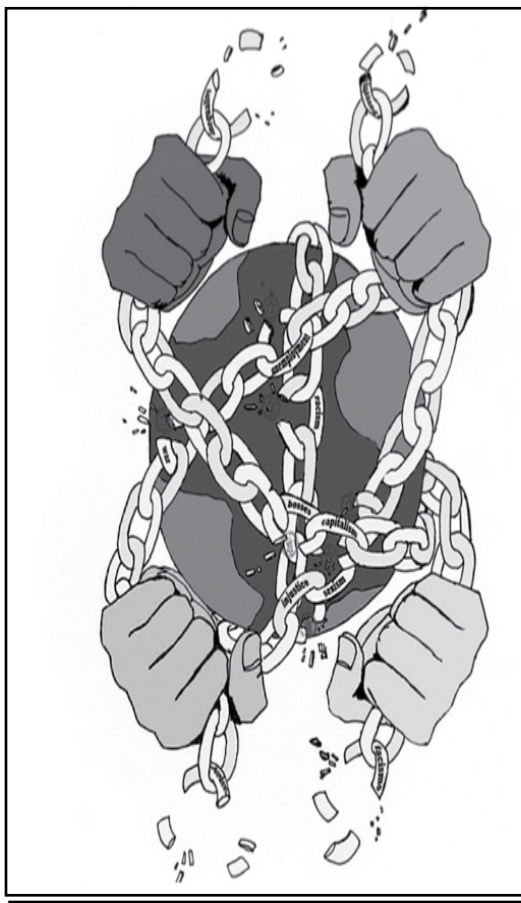
Capitalism's response to a crisis of their system, when the bosses can no longer sustain the charade of liberal democracy and resort to more direct control and state terror instead. Fascism is marked by the ruling capitalists disciplining their own ranks to serve the urgent needs of the capitalist state and weather the crisis. To defend their system from internal and external threats, they use all the means available in their state apparatus, including violence. To build unity within their class and loyalty from workers, they rely on nationalist politics and calls for sacrifice. Their strategy is to mislead the working class to kill our working class sisters and brothers in the next inter-imperialist war.

Big Fascists

The Big Fascists are the dominant finance capitalist faction of the U.S. ruling class. They represent the wealthiest and most powerful bosses in the U.S., including multinational banks like Chase and Citibank, multinational oil companies like ExxonMobil, the big automakers, Boeing, Amazon, and the major media companies. As the dominant grouping since World War II, the Big Fascists were the architects of the liberal world order with the U.S. bosses on top. Their dominance rests on U.S. financial and military power and its strategic control of the Middle East and the flow of oil to Europe, Asia, and Africa. To sustain this dominance, they need to rebuild a huge, multiracial military for inter-imperialist war, most likely with China.

Small Fascists

The Small Fascists are a group of domestically oriented U.S. capitalists who are challenging the Big Fascists over the direction of U.S. imperialism. Since their interests are less tied to controlling the flow of oil, they are against heavy taxation to keep troops in the Middle East and in general oppose costly military bases and invasions. They're willing to rely on a smaller, whiter army, backed by nuclear weapons and the Air Force. They have used open racism to build a political following.



The Internationale

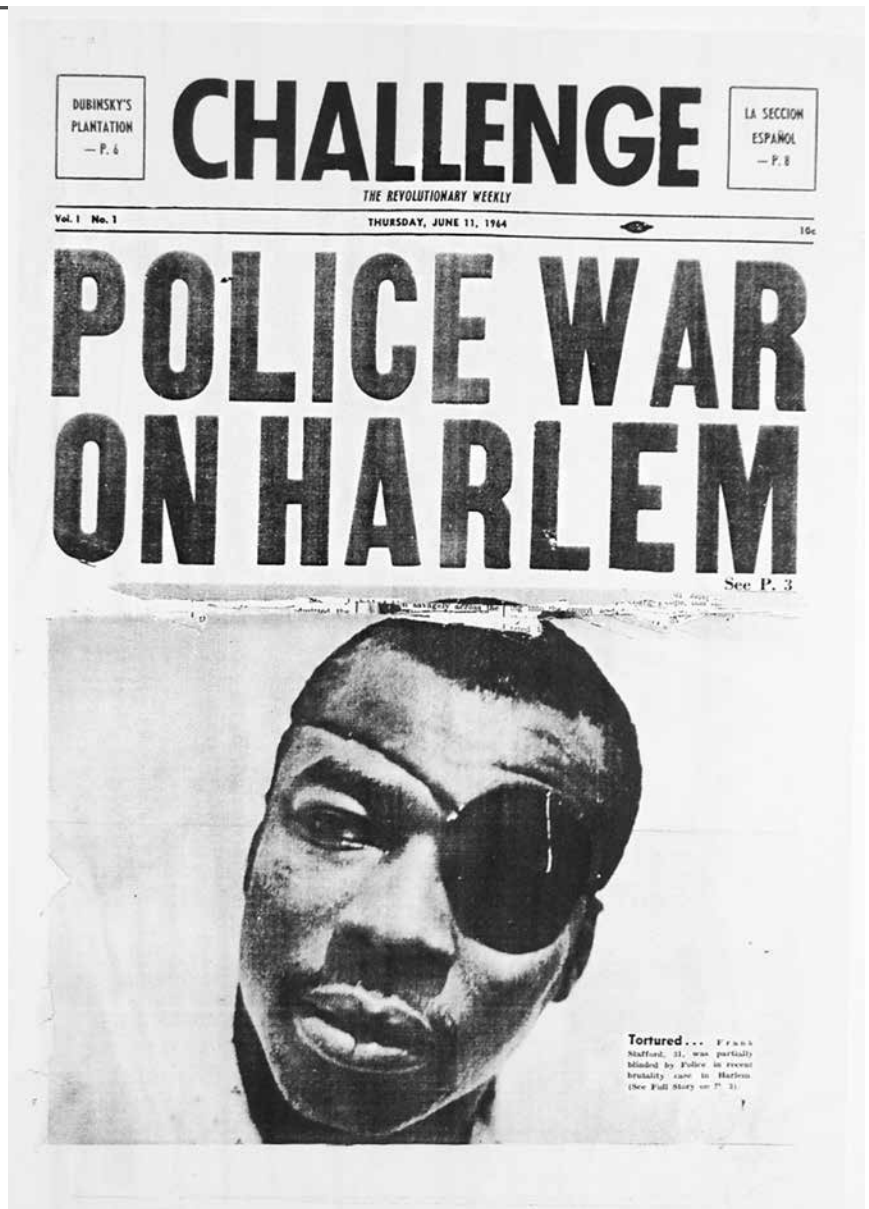
Arise ye prisoners of starvation,
Arise ye workers of the earth,
For justice thunders condemnation,
A better world's in birth!

No more tradition's chains shall bind us,
Arise, ye slaves, no more in thrall,
The earth shall rise on new foundations,
We have been naught we shall be all.

(Refrain twice)
'Tis the final conflict
Let each stand in their place
The International working class
Shall be the human race.

Letter

I remember the first issue of CHALLENGE


DUBINSKY'S PLANTATION — P. 6

CHALLENGE

THE REVOLUTIONARY WEEKLY

LA SECCION ESPAÑOL — P. 8

Vol. 1 No. 1 THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 1964 10c

POLICE WAR ON HARLEM

See P. 3

Tortured... Frank Stafford, 31, was partially blinded by Police in recent brutality case in Harlem (See Full Story on P. 3)

The first issue of CHALLENGE (Vol. 1, No 1) came out on June 15, 1964. When we sold that first issue of CHALLENGE, most of us had no idea how significant it was AND the role that CHALLENGE would soon play in the fight against capitalism. The headline on page one was prophetic: **Police War on Harlem.** Barely four weeks later, the Harlem Rebellion started after racist KKKop Thomas Gilligan of the New York Police Department (NYPD) shot and killed young James Powell who, with his friends, was trying to cool off from the July heat by spraying water on themselves and a bystander who complained about it and eventually called the police. This killing was the last straw in a long series of racist oppression. The news media called the rebellion a "riot" but it was most definitely a rebellion! Most of the stores that were attacked were pawnshops that had been looting the residents of Harlem for decades!

The Progressive Labor Movement (PLM), which became the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) in April 1965, put out its most significant (and briefest!!) leaflet: **Wanted for Murder - Gilligan the Cop.** Rebels carried the leaflet all over Harlem. The PLM couldn't print enough of them!! ALL of the so-called "Black leaders" had the same false message: Go home and Pray ... don't fight back!! But the NYC bosses knew exactly who to attack; the Harlem rebels and the PLM. So-called "free speech" went out the window. In essence, martial law was declared.

On a personal note, I sold the first issue of CHALLENGE in three locations: The Upper West Side of Manhattan, the Lower East Side of Manhattan, and the Garment District in Manhattan. The PLM held weekly rallies in the Garment District and CHALLENGE was a big help in getting our message out. We sold CHALLENGE on the street to the garment workers and when the boss wasn't around, we went inside the shops where we could talk more extensively to several workers simultaneously. Unfortunately, most of us (maybe ALL of us) didn't understand anything about base building so we didn't get workers' names. That's a key lesson for our newer members: ALWAYS get names so you can stay in touch and follow up with as many people as possible. That's key to building the Party.

The police and sanitation departments harassed us while we sold CHALLENGE. They gave me quite a few tickets for supposedly "littering." After my first ticket, the PLM got me a lawyer who taught me what to say at my trial. After my second ticket, I no longer needed a lawyer; I could defend myself and I did so!

CHALLENGE was the only newspaper, magazine, or TV and radio station that told the truth about the Harlem Rebellion, as well as the many other rebellions in Black neighborhoods throughout the U.S. The summer of 1964 made it very clear who were the sellouts and who supported the working class. Every one of us should do their utmost to ensure that CHALLENGE continues to be a working-class beacon that will help workers to understand the oppressive nature of capitalism AND the only solution to its miseries: **COMMUNIST REVOLUTION!**✪

International solidarity for workers in Colombia

Continued from page 3

their eyes, 187 cases of firearm shootings by the police, 25 victims of sexual assault, 45 victims of homicides allegedly committed by the public force and 29 currently under verification (Temblores, 5/28).

There was some nationalism at this protest. In PLP we believe that workers in the U.S. and Colombia are part of one class, separated by borders that were created and enforced by capitalist stooges like Joe Biden, Uribe and Donald Trump. The chant, "el pueblo unido, jamás será vencido" [The people united will never be defeated] was popular on the march. PLP members instead chanted "los obreros unidos, jamás serán vencidos"

[The workers united will never be defeated]. This was also well received. For the emancipation of all workers we must become united against the capitalist class and that means fighting all their stooges, Biden and Kamala Harris, not just Trump and Uribe. People on the bus saw the connection to the struggle in Palestine. Although there is a thread of nationalism, class solidarity is strong.

The bus ride home was quiet at first, but after a brief stop, the speeches and music began. A comrade thanked the group for being an inspiration. We had distributed copies of CHALLENGE and made contacts.

Workers: Let's make the world ours

Uribe said on Twitter: "We support the right of soldiers and police to use their weapons to defend their integrity and to defend people and things from the criminal action of the vandal's terrorism."

Throughout history, the capitalists, the ruling class, like Uribe, Santos, Samper, Marta L.Ramírez, Trump, Biden, and their governments, have used nationalism, racism, sexism, other divisions by regions among our country or cities, to divide us and advance their political and economic agendas. They protect their interests, their money, their profits and their wealth.

But no more!

It was wonderful that so many people from all over the U.S. and Canada were able to organize themselves without the need of any politicians. That's a bit of working class power; a small step toward communism. We need to abolish all forms of discrimination and police brutality. We need to smash racism, sexism, classism and capitalism. We need to organize for communist revolution. Then the world will be ours.✪

Smash sexism with communist revolution

Continued from page 8

Boulder, 2019) and concubinage among the rotten elite of the Chinese Communist Party (BBC, 10/2013) as a terrible cost paid by the working class for the failure of these parties to defeat capitalist ideas and win a truly communist world.

Fight against sexism by fighting for communism

In order for sexism to end, workers cannot return to hunting and gathering social systems and somehow roll back the clock on all the advances made in technology, science and culture that came through class society.

The truth is just the opposite: we must move all these levels of society FORWARD through communist revolution, where the best advances of modern medicine and technology can be reappropriated and controlled by the working-class itself. We reject a politics of representation based on "identity," but we understand that women workers, like all members of the working class, are not just critical, they are indispensable, for leading our class in the antiracist, antisexist world that we are fighting to achieve.

It is from the practices that we implement today, while we do not yet hold state power, that the seeds for communism must be sewn. We begin by fighting sexism in the class struggle—at our jobs, community organizations, schools, military, and streets.

From leaders who hold key positions in our Party, to the collective struggles that we wage with our fellow workers, to the ways we strive for equality within our personal lives, to the way our newspaper is produced and distributed, we fight to build an egalitarian world through building an egalitarian party. Fight for communism! Join PLP!✪

Smash sexism with communist revolution

As U.S. bosses grow tired of lost profits after over a year of pandemic driven shut downs, we are seeing cities internationally struggle to "reopen." Workers have been asked to return to unsafe work conditions, send their children back to schools that might not have their health as a priority, and mentally readjust to a world that has been further thrown into crisis. While these domestic duties fall on all workers, we still live in a society where women bear the brunt of these responsibilities. So we, in the Progressive Labor Party, ask our fellow sisters and brothers, what has been done fundamentally to advance the fight against sexism for the working class?

Just as the bosses have largely succeeded in turning Women's History Month into a pro-capitalist celebration of women who have "made it", so too is Mother's Day a way to mask the super-exploitation of household work with gifts such as flowers. In the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) we know that only a truly antisexist communist party can lead workers in the complete overthrow of this capitalist system which makes the daily nurturing of the working-class the responsibility of women workers rather than the responsibility of our class as a whole.

Equality: humanity's original state

Sexist inequality emerged in the past several thousand years of human history. For 10's of thousands of years, humans were based in egalitarian, hunter-gatherer societies, and during that phase of history women were central to the major decision-making around questions of production and distribution of a community's resources. Although women both hunted and gathered—often tying their children to their front or backsides while casting a net or raising a bow and arrow—gathering tended to be a primary women's task. This meant women had to be botanists. They had to know which berries, grasses, seeds, could be gathered so as not to poison their communities. In Central America and Mexico, for example, women were chiefly responsible for the domestication of corn (Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, An Indigenous People's History of the United States, p.15).

In short, women were the first farmers. Why is it important to know about that phase of history, when there was no private property or system of class-based exploitation? Because it demonstrates that maintaining the conditions of daily life was—for most of history—not only a valued, but the chiefly valued form of work.

Origins of sexism in class rule

With the origin of private property, exploitation of all working people in the ancient world entailed the super-exploitation of women. It was not until commodity production came into being that domestically categorized responsibilities became associated with the unrespected, unvalued and unpaid labor largely performed by women.

Internationally, women and children were the first significant form of private property in slave society. It was not until the beginnings of class-based societies that there emerged the need to devalue the literal "labor" that women produced by giving birth to children. Under class rule, women's primary function became reproducing the offspring of social classes—whether slave, peasant, free artisan, noble, or elite.

Capitalism creates modern forms of sexism

Without communist revolution, working-class women are tasked with ensuring the well-being of children who will grow up to be the new workers and cannon-fodder for the capitalists of the world. Whether they join the military, end up in jail or die at the hands of killer cops, or working as educators or engineers, in textile mills or as hotel workers, our children will be destined to serve the interests of the rich unless we overthrow this racist capitalism system.

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, when schools closed and children were expected to stay home, home-care responsibilities primarily fell on women workers. Whether single, partnered, or living with family, many women workers were themselves expected to work from home AND ALSO become the stand-in teachers while their children received either virtual schooling or no schooling at all. Covid-19 has been absolutely brutal for countless families around the world, and women in general, bore the brunt of that increased "social distancing" burden.

Socialism made advances against sexist oppression

Socialism in the Soviet Union, China and Cuba made a proven positive impact on the quality of life of all workers and particularly women, but they also made significant errors by relegating the fight against sexism to a women's issue, failing to place the full force of the revolution behind the smashing of sexist inequality within their parties and in the society as a whole. In the past 100 years our class has made leaps in social progress when we took control of the state and production.

@PLPCHALLENGE
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In the Soviet Union, within months of seizing power in Petrograd, Alexandra Kollontai and the Women's Dept of 1919 was critical to the ushering in, under the leadership of the Commissariats of Education and Social Welfare, socialist programs that fundamentally overturned the capitalist notion that child-rearing is an atomized responsibility for each individual working family. In Communism and the Family (1920), Kollantai wrote:

We already have homes for very small babies, creches, kindergartens, children's colonies and homes, hospitals and health resorts for sick children.... All this goes to show that the responsibility for the child is passing from the family to the collective.

In China, the brutal and widely practiced feudal remnants of footbinding, concubinage and slavery were abolished overnight wherever the Red Army and the Communist Party held power during war and revolution, and across the land after 1949.

In Cuba, thousands of women were sent to the Soviet Union to study engineering beginning in the late 1960s, and as early as 1961, prostitution"a legacy of both U.S. imperialism and domestic Cuban sexism" was outlawed.

But many of the gains made in the fight against sexism under socialist regimes were taken away, like so many reforms. Even as early as the 1930s, elements of the Kollantai-led programs began to be dismantled as the rapid industrialization of the economy, which also reintroduced wage incentives, helped the Soviets prepare for the impending war with Nazi Germany. In Cuba, the Fidel Castro regime had undone its own anti-sexist efforts by inscribing into law that only mothers were allowed to leave or miss work due to sick children. In essence, this meant fathers were barred from

tending to their children without risking punishment by the state. Now we see the vicious return of sex trafficking in the former Soviet sphere (UC

Continued on page 7

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